

THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN  
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

Madison 6

DEPARTMENT OF GENETICS

December 13, 1949.

Dean R. K. Froker,  
Agricultural Hall,  
University of Wisconsin.

Dear Dean ~~Froker~~:

In support of the Genetics Department's request for artificial ventilation of part of the second floor of the Genetics Building, I would like to mention our experience last summer, as discussed this morning.

A thermostat is mounted on the wall between Room 200 and the laboratory (201), so that I had the opportunity of noting daily temperatures during the summer. It was almost consistently 90° F. or above throughout July and August, with very little variation even at night or more moderate atmospheric conditions. The uniformly high temperature is probably due to the lack of ventilation in Room 200 - there are no windows opening directly on it-, and <sup>the</sup> fact that the ceiling is uninsulated, consisting merely of the roof boards. Sun-heated air collects in the loft, and remains there throughout the summer. In addition, the humidity is also excessive owing to the operation of a steam autoclave and still in the immediate vicinity, without adequate provision for venting the steam, and heat.

Entirely aside from considerations of personal comfort, these conditions make bacteriological work during the summer very difficult. Agar plates refuse to dry out for days, and quickly become contaminated with molds, making research a very frustrating experience. The high temperatures and humidity aggravate very seriously the problem of maintaining cultures free from molds and other contaminants.

Any measures which would relieve these very serious conditions would greatly improve the research output of the summer months, which, owing to the relative freedom from class obligations, should be especially productive for students.

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg,  
Assistant Professor of Genetics.